

REMARKS

By the present amendment, the specification and the abstract have been amended to correct formal defects, claims 1-2, 4-5, 7, and 13-15 have been amended, and claims 16-26 have been added.

Support for the added recitation in claim 1 is found in particular on page 13, lines 9-14. Claim 2 has been amended to recite "another adhesive layer" since a first "adhesive layer" is defined in present claim 1. The amendments to claims 4-5, 7 and 13-15 are to correct formal defects.

Support for new claim 16 is found in claim 9, support for new claim 17 is found in particular on page 6, lines 17-18, support for new claims 18-23 is found in claims 2, 4, 10-12, and 9, respectively, support for new claims 24 and 25 is found on page 7, lines 14-24, and support for new claim 26 is found in claim 9.

Claims 1-26 are pending in the present application. Independent claims 1, 5, 17 and 24 are directed to an optical member. Claims 2-4 and 10-12 depend on claim 1, claims 6-8 and 13-15 depend on claim 5, claims 18-22 depend on claim 17 and claim 25 depends on claim 24. Claims 9, 16, 23 and 26 are directed to a liquid crystal display and depend on claims 1, 5, 17 and 24, respectively.

In the Office Action, the specification and the claims are objected to. Regarding the description, it is indicated that "uttermost" should be "outermost" on page 5, line 13 and page 25, line 4 of the description, and that on page 3, line 16, "has" should be deleted after "comprises",

on page 6, line 17, "transeparent" should be "transparent", and on page 13, line 24, "is no particular one, can used a suitable one" is unclear. Regarding the claims, it is indicated that "uttermost" should be "outermost" in claim 5, line 2, and that "the protective film" lacks antecedent basis and should be "the separator" in claims 13-15.

The specification has been amended to correct these informalities as suggested in the Office Action. In particular, the objected phrase on page 13, line 24 has been replaced by "is not particularly limited, and any suitable one can be used". The claims have been similarly amended. Accordingly, it is submitted that the objections should be withdrawn.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by JP2000-347010, and claims 5-8 and 13-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by JP2000-347181.

The rejections are respectfully traversed. JP'010 and JP'181 are improperly cited under 35 U.S.C. 102(a), because they are not by "another." Reference is made to the Declaration by the inventors in the present application, in which these Japanese applications are listed. In particular, it is noted that the name of the fourth inventor in the English version of JP'010 and JP'181 is incorrectly spelled as a result of an erroneous English transliteration of the Japanese characters, and should have been transliterated as Takashi SHOUDA.

In view of the above, it is submitted that these rejections should be withdrawn.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by JP2000-162438 to Kobayashi et al. (Kobayashi), and claims 5-8 and 13-15 are

rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kobayashi.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

With respect to claim 1, Kobayashi discloses a very different construction than the presently claimed invention. Specifically, the protective layer of Kobayashi is a layer of transparent material which is applied permanently on a polarizing film by coating or laminating (see Kobayashi at col. 11, lines 45-59), and thus, is part of the optical materials forming the optical element.

In contrast, the protective layer as presently claimed in claim 1 comprises a protective base and an adhesive layer disposed on the protective base so that the protective base can be released together with the adhesive layer from the optical material. Thus, the protective base can be attached to the optical element during stacking and processing, and subsequently removed.

Further, with respect to claim 5, Kobayashi only discloses a roughened surface on a protective layer applied to a polarizing film, in order to use the properties of such surface in a construction using the polarizing film. Thus, contrary to the interpretation set forth in the Office Action, there would have been no motivation to use a separator with a roughened surface as claimed in present claim 5, because the separator is generally removed before including the polarizing film in an optical construction.

Next, with respect to claim 17, Kobayashi concerns a protective layer that is directly applied to a polarizing film. Kobayashi is silent as to adding a transparent layer on this protective layer. In contrast, the optical element as claimed in present claim 17 includes a polarizing plate

with a protective layer, on which a protective film having a rough outer surface is applied.

Last, with respect to claim 24, Kobayashi is silent as to any reflector. Therefore, Kobayashi fails to teach, suggest, or provide a motivation for applying a reflecting layer having a fine undulating structure as recited in present claim 24.

In summary, Kobayashi fails to teach or suggest these features of the present claims, and therefore, the present claims are not anticipated, and not obvious over Kobayashi.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections over Kobayashi should be withdrawn.

Next, claims 1, 3-4 and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US 6088079 to Kameyama et al. (Kameyama), and claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kameyama.

The rejections are respectfully traversed. First, Kameyama is silent as to the degree of roughness, and therefore, it fails to teach or suggest a roughness as recited in the present claims. Second, the construction of Kameyama is similar to that of Kobayashi, so that the same distinctions discussed above are also effective against Kameyama.

In addition, Kameyama fails to suggest modifications of the construction disclosed therein to obtain the presently claimed invention, because Kameyama is concerned only about sticking of a polarizing plate in a display, i.e., adherence in close contact between a surface of a polarizing plate and, e.g., a polarized light separation sheet on a surface of the back light side in an LCD panel with a back light. Thus, Kameyama does not provide any motivation for using a protective

film with rough surface to avoid blocking during processing of stacked optical elements as in the present invention. Therefore, the present claims are not obvious over Kameyama.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections over Kameyama should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

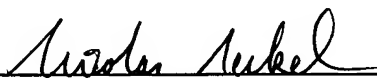
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In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP

By:   
Nicolas E. Seckel  
Attorney for Applicants  
Reg. No. 44,373

Atty. Docket No. 020606

Suite 1000  
1725 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
Tel: (202) 659-2930  
Fax: (202) 887-0357

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